



# **County of Loudoun**

## **Office of Emergency Management**

### **Press Release**

**For Additional Information:**

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Or

The Office of Emergency Preparedness  
(703) 777-0333

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***For Immediate Release:***

Storm Preparations Necessary

With Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Charlie threatening Florida, it is important to remember that every county and city in the Commonwealth of Virginia is vulnerable in some way to the destructive forces of hurricanes. Even counties that are far inland, like Loudoun, are vulnerable to the affects of hurricanes. Whether the threat comes from violent winds, storm surge, flash flooding, or spawned tornadoes. If you live in an area of the County that is prone to flooding under normal conditions, the Loudoun County Office of Emergency Management and Loudoun County Fire-Rescue Services would like to encourage you to make necessary preparations for the possible flooding in your area.

If you are in a flood-prone area, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the potential hazards of floods so that you may respond and act quickly.

***Before the Storm***

- ✓ Make a visual or written record of your possessions to help you claim losses in the event of damage. Include photographs of cars, boats and recreational vehicles. Get professional appraisals of jewelry, collectibles, artwork or other items that may be difficult to evaluate. Also, photograph the exterior of your home – include landscaping that may not be insurable, but does increase your property value for tax purposes. Make copies of receipts and canceled checks for valuable items.
- ✓ Have an evacuation plan in place, and practice it, BEFORE flooding occurs. Familiarize yourself with the evacuation routes and be prepared to move to a place of safety quickly. Everyone in your family should know where to go if they have to leave. During floods, roadways may become impassable quickly, cutting off your escape route. It is important that you head for higher ground before water becomes too deep. If roads in your area flood during a storm, look for alternative routes to use during flooding.
- ✓ Plan where you would go if you were told to evacuate. Choose several places... a relative's home, a friend's home, or a motel in another town, or a shelter.
- ✓ Keep your automobile fueled; if electric power is cut off, gas stations may not be able to operate pumps for several days.
- ✓ In case family members are separated from one another during floods or flashfloods (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school), have a plan for getting back together.
- ✓ Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact". After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.
- ✓ Have an emergency plan for your pets. Due to health regulations, animals are not allowed inside emergency shelters. Make arrangements for your pets.
- ✓ Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1, police, fire department and which radio station to tune to for emergency information.

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***Assemble Your Disaster Supplies Kit and Have it on Hand:***

- ✓ Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs and those of each family member for three to five days. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need in an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffel bags or covered trash containers.
- ✓ One change of clothing and sturdy footwear and one blanket or sleeping bag per person is needed. First aid kits should include your family's prescriptions and medications. Include contacts or an extra pair of glasses.
- ✓ Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlights and plenty of extra batteries.
- ✓ An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash (small denominations) or traveler's checks
- ✓ Sanitation supplies including toilet paper, soap, plastic garbage bags and disinfectant
- ✓ Non-electric can opener
- ✓ Three to five-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil. Include a manual can opener.
- ✓ Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.
- ✓ Important family documents in a waterproof container. Keep the originals of important financial and family documents in a safe place. You will need accessible records for tax and insurance purposes.

***If Time Permits, Here are Other Steps That You Can Take Before the Flood Waters Come***

- ✓ Turn off all utilities at the main power switch and close the main gas valve if evacuation appears necessary.
- ✓ Move valuables, such as papers, furs, jewelry, and clothing to upper floors or higher elevations
- ✓ Fill bathtubs, sinks and plastic soda bottles with clean water. Sanitize the sinks and tubs first by using bleach. Rinse, then fill with clean water.
- ✓ Bring outdoor possessions, such as lawn furniture and trashcans inside, or tie them down securely.

***If Evacuation is Needed, Know What to Do:***

- ✓ Listen to your battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- ✓ Take your Disaster Supplies Kit with you.
- ✓ Listen to your battery-powered radio or car radio and use travel routes specified by local officials – do not use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.

For additional information, please contact the Loudoun County Office of Emergency Management by calling 703-777-2243. The Office of Emergency Management will continue to monitor the situation and will provide additional information as the situation warrants.

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